

Message Text

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60

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /057 W

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R 241522Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4688

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY UUWAIT

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 3736

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SY, IQ, US, IS

SUBJECT: DAMASCUS RUMOR MILL--USG INITIATIVE; SYRO-IRAQI
RECONCILIATION

1. KUWAITI AMBASSADOR HUSSEIN IS LATEST OF SEVERAL COLLEAGUES IN DAMASCUS TO QUERY ME RE SECRET VISIT ALLEGEDLY PAID DAMASCUS IN RECENT DAYS BY SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TO INITIATE SYRO-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS. (AKTHERTON IS OFFICER MOST COMMONLY IDENTIFIED.) TOLD KUWAITI THIS WAS MERE SOUK RUMOR. SPREADING OUT HIS WARES, KUWAITI NOTED HE HAD HOARD SYRIAN GOVERNMENT HAD DECIDED SEND SENIOR MILITARY OFFICER, PERHAPS SHIHABI, TO WASHINGTON FOR NEGOTIATIONS, AT SAME TIME AS SARG HAS UNDER REVIEW ITS LONGSTANDING POLICY OF FORBIDDING FEDAYEEN TO OPERATE FROM GOLAN TERRITORY AGAINST ISRAELWM

2. KUWAITI THEN SAID HE HAD RECENTLY LEARNED THAT HIGHLY SECRET SYRIAN MISSION HAD BEEN DISPATCHED TO BAGHDAD WITHIN PAST TWO WEEKS TO OPEN DISCUSSIONS LEADING TO SYRO-IRAQI RECONCILIATION. SAID HE UNABLE VERIFY THIS
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REPORT BUT CONSIDERED, IF TRUE, THAT IT WAS MOST SIGNIFICANT

OF ALL ARAB REACTION TO SINAI ACCORD. SAID HE HAD BEEN MONITORING IRAQI RADIO OUT PUT ON PERIODIC BASIS AND CONSIDERED THERE HAD BEEN SHARP REDUCTION SINCE SEPTEMBER 1 IN CAMPAIGN OF VITUPERATION AGAINST SYRIA.

3. SYRIAN COURTSHIP OF IRAQIS, KIWAITI ASSUMED, SOUGHT TO ATTRACT IRAQ'S ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT IN THE EASTERN FRONT. THIS, HE ARGUED, WOULD CONTRIBUTE GREATLY TO FRONT'S EFFECTIVENESS; IN CONTRAST, MILITARY COORDINATION BETWEEN JORDAN AND SYRIA WOULD BE VIRTUALLY MEANINGLESS IN TERMS ADDING MUSCLE TO THE FRONT.

4. COMMENT: ABOVE SUMMARIZED SOME OF THE MORE COMMON RUMORS FLOATING AROUND DAMASCUS AS SYRIA PURSUES ITS PUBLIC ATTACKS ON EGYPT. SYRIAN LINE HAS HARDENED REGARDING ANY FUTURE SYRO-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS AS SHOWN IN PRIME MIN AYYOUBI'S SEPTEMBER 22 STATEMENT TO SYRIAN PARLIAMENT (I.E., THAT SYRIA WOULD REJECT ANY AGREEMENT COSTING EVEN A FRACTION OF WHAT EGYPT PAID FOR SINAI ACCORD AND WOULD EVEN REFUSE ACCEPT ALL OF GOLAN SHOULD ISRAEL SEEK IMPOSE POLITICAL OR NON-POLITICAL CONDITIONS.)

5. ACTION REQUESTED:
ANALYSIS OF BAGHDAD AND DAMASCUS BROADCASTS FROM PERIOD SEPTEMBER 1 TO DATE TO DETERMINE WHETHER IN FACT MUD SLINGING CAMPAIGN HAS SIGNIFICANTLY ABATED.
MURPHY

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